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BOOK REVIEWS.

Hull's Elements of Algebra for Beginners. By GEORGE W. HULL. New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago: American Book Co., 1904. Pp. 159. $0.50.

A good book, though we see no reason why it should have been written, as the market is full of just as good. In our judgment, the giving of rules before processes and of definitions before the thing to be defined or the process under the rule is thoroughly understood, is faulty.

The author says in his preface: "We have made the equation the most prominent idea of each chapter." And yet, nearly 75 per cent. of the equations in the book are given for solution. It would seem that if the equation is so important (and it is), the originating of it is far more important than its solution. The child has simply to recall certain facts already learned by rote to work an equation made for him. On the other hand, if he be given the conditions, let them be ever so simple, he has not only to recall the facts as before; he has also to draw an inference and through this inference form his own equation, which becomes a part of himself, thus enhancing its value and causing its solution to be far more pleasurable. This, however, is a fault found in many elementary algebras. The author has simply followed the beaten path.

WILLIAM M. GIFFIN.

Educational Music Course. Teachers' Edition for Elementary Grades. By JAMES M. MCLAUGHLIN AND W. W. GILCHRIST. Boston: Ginn & Co. Pp. 271. $1.25.

THIS book is a teacher's manual designed to supplement the *New First Reader of the Educational Music Course* by furnishing excellent piano accompaniments for the melodies given in the pupil's *Reader*. That harmony greatly enhances the value of songs is undeniable, and where a piano is even occasionally available, it should be employed. In all school assembly-rooms a piano will be found, and, in default of the schoolroom piano, this should be used as often as practicable for the sake of the ear-training which the presence of good harmony affords. This book contains a collection of good rote-songs for elementary grades, together with practical drills for developing the child's voice; also, in connection with songs for sight-reading, carefully graded exercises in time and interval. In an appendix, songs by great writers adapted and arranged for children's use are given. While it is axiomatic that the child should be given "the best," it is a question whether it be wise to discount the future by injuring the great songs written for adults through divorcing them from their virile texts and resetting them to neutral-tinted verses, and, furthermore, pruning them, or cutting out those integral portions which furnish a contrast and background for the simpler melodic gem.

M. R. KERN.